

Question on Notice
No. 1973
Asked on 6 October 2010

MS NELSON-CARR asked the Deputy Premier and Minister for Health (MR LUCAS)-

QUESTION:

Will the Minister inform the House of the humanitarian work carried out by Townsville Hospital's Professor, Ajay Rane, and his team in India?

ANSWER:

I thank the Honourable Member for Mundingburra for her question.

Professor Ajay Rane is The Townsville Hospital's Director of Urogynaecology. For the past 10 years, Professor Rane and a dedicated team of volunteers, gathered from Australia and other parts of the world, have travelled to the Gosha Hospital in the Indian province of Tamil Nadu to deliver life-changing surgery to local women.

On his latest trip, in September this year, Professor Rane was accompanied by Townsville Hospital staff specialist Dr Jay Iyer.

Professor Rane's last trip marked a decade of performing gynaecological surgery on local Indian women to treat chronic incontinence and other conditions brought about by unassisted childbirth. Women in this part of India almost always give birth without any medical help. As a result, many Indian women suffer complications which, while rare in western countries, can make them chronically incontinent and unable to bear more children.

Ten years ago, the conditions Professor Rane and his team were working in were appalling. Now I am advised the hospital has a state-of-the-art operating room, a hygienic and functioning ward and a status as the only centre in India for urogynaecology training.

There has been significant recognition for Professor Rane over the years from the Indian Government and at home.

In 2007, I am advised the Tamil Nadu Government named a ward at the Gosha Hospital, the Dr Paula Rane Fistula Ward in honour of Professor Rane's wife's work (she is a GP) as part of her husband's missions.

In 2010, Professor Rane co-produced Bollywood movie *Riwayat*, which exposed the widespread practice of female infanticide and feticide in India, which won the *award du merite* (award of merit) at the Monaco Charity Film Festival.

In 2003, Professor Rane was appointed Chair and Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at James Cook University's School of Medicine.

Professor Rane's rare surgical skills, his ground-breaking research in the field of urogynaecology and, most of all, his humanity have changed the lives of many, many women in the most wretched circumstances imaginable.